

Passing Through

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

Rolling brown hills. Featureless. Bare. Late Autumn. Wisps of ground fog belch up from the hollows.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

An interstate snakes through the barren landscape. Cars chug along, bumper-to-bumper.

MAN (O.S.)
We'll lose our Star Points.

NEW WHITE CHEVY TAHOE

Darts between lanes. Finds an opening. Breaks free.

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - DAY

DR. DAVID RING, 40, a prime, handsome specimen wearing a self-assured grin, drives. PATTI, 38, his button-cute wife, surfs a BlackBerry beside him.

PATTI
Why do you always lie?

DAVID
Then you think of something.

PATTI
It's Thanksgiving. We're not getting a hotel. End of discussion.

DAVID
They go to bed so early. I have to be so quiet. I feel so inhibited.

He playfully pats her leg.

DAVID
Just quoting you.

PATTI
I'll scream quietly.

She looks at him, perturbed.

PATTI

It's your Dad. You should want to
spend some quality time.
Especially now.

DAVID

I do.

She shakes her head. Her BLACKBERRY BEEPS.

CLOSE ON BLACKBERRY

Italian restaurants.

A charming brick villa, covered in grape vines and twinkling
lights appears. ANTONIO'S TRATTORIA on a marquee above.

INT. ANTONIO'S - NIGHT

Pizza Hut with a full bar. Dino croons over bad speakers.

Patti tears open a small gift box at a table. David quaffs
champagne. A bottle is upended in an ice bucket.

She peeks at what's inside. Tries to look pleased. He
kisses her neatly.

DAVID

Happy anniversary, pumpkin.

A WAITRESS, 25, scorpion tat on her neck, arrives, bearing
menus and a fresh bottle of bubbly.

WAITRESS

How many years, cute couple?

David counts on his fingers. Patti stares up, feeling her
drinks.

PATTI

He'll have to take off his shoes.

EXT. ANTONIO'S - NIGHT

David and Patti walk out, arm-in-arm. She wears a garish
turquoise necklace. Like the ones sold at truck stops.

DAVID

You hate it. Admit it.

PATTI
No. I love it.

She stumbles on a curb. He catches her. BEEPS a REMOTE.
Headlights flash. They get in the Tahoe.

INT. TAHOE - NIGHT

He slides behind the wheel. Yawns. She sidles up beside
him.

DAVID
It's genuine Navajo turquoise.

She plants a sloppy wet drunken kiss on him.

PATTI
You forgot. But I still love you.

DAVID
I didn't forget.

She surveys him contemptuously. He cranks the car.

PATTI
You okay to drive?

DAVID
Yeah.

PATTI
You're tired. Why don't we get a
motel?

DAVID
We need to make some time.

PATTI
Maybe you shouldn't drive.

DAVID
You damn well shouldn't.

PATTI
It's okay for you to get drunk.

DAVID
I'm not drunk.

She offers up a half-hearted salute. He slams the truck into
drive. ROARS OFF.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

David peels away from the curb. Races toward a sign: "I-20 MONROE." An arrow points right.

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

David turns on a side road. Patti settles back in the seat.

DAVID
How much further to the interstate?

PATTI
Six miles.

He turns on the RADIO. LOUD ROCK. He tunes to CLASSICAL.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

A BACH MINUET PLAYS on the RADIO. David gazes around, trying to get his bearings.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Tahoe tears down an unmarked secondary road through black-as-pitch woods. Ground fog drifts across the road.

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

David flips on his fog lights.

DAVID
Come a lot further than any six miles.

He glances at Patti. She's asleep. He looks at his hopelessly fancy in-dash Galileo 4000 GPS.

DAVID
Guess it's you and me, bro.

He reaches down. Turns GALILEO on.

GALILEO
Destination?

DAVID
Monroe. I-20.

INSERT - GALILEO GPS SCREEN

A map of Shreveport, Louisiana appears.

BACK TO SCENE

He looks down at the screen. The truck veers off the pavement.

GALILEO
Turn right on Shed Road.
Approximately one mile.

He looks back at the road. Corrects his steering.

GALILEO
Turn left on I-20. Eastbound on-
ramp one-quarter mile.

He glances to the side.

DAVID'S POV - A STREET SIGN

"SHELL ROAD."

BACK TO SCENE

He speeds past the sign.

DAVID
Shit.

GALILEO
Turn right on Shed Road.

DAVID
I know I know.

He hits a button.

GALILEO
Shed Road.

DAVID
No. Shell Road. East to Monroe.

GALILEO
Turn right on Shed Road.

DAVID
Shell Road, you piece of shit.

He peers down. Adjusts the map page on the screen. The truck veers right, eating a shoulder. A jolt.

He gazes up.

Unspeakable horror on his face. He floors the brake pedal.

DAVID'S POV - AN OBJECT

hurtles against the windshield. Too dark to see what.

It bounces off the hood.

A crack slowly spiderwebs across the windshield.

BACK TO SCENE

The TAHOE SQUEALS to a jarring halt. Patti bolts awake. Her glasses go flying.

Dead silence.

GALILEO

Destination?

David jumps, startled. Dazed, Patti looks at him.

PATTI

You -- okay?

He nods finally. Cuts the ignition. Jumps out.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

He runs to the front of the Tahoe. Kneels. Inspects damage.

Busted passenger side headlight. Bent right front fender. Scratches all up and down the hood. Fog lights undamaged. They cast an eerie, yellow glow across the pavement.

FAINT, TINNY MUSIC PLAYS. He gazes around, perplexed at where this is coming from. Looks under the truck.

SMALL OBJECT

On the pavement. It hangs off the back of the truck.

EXT. ROAD

He jogs to the back of the truck.

An iPod, headphone still attached, hangs off the rear windshield wiper. A popular alternative ROCK TUNE PLAYS.

He stares at the iPod, completely unnerved.

DAVID

Holy fuck.

He closes his eyes, as if he can somehow make this go away. Opens them. Still there.

He kicks weeds aside in a drainage ditch beside the road. No sign of a body.

He turns around. Surveys the pavement behind him.

A seemingly endless ribbon of black swallowed by fog. Then

A pinpoint of light stabs through the mist. Headlights!

He grabs the iPod. Flings it as far as he can into the woods.

INT. TAHOE - NIGHT

Patti looks in her side mirror, trying to see where David went. She has her glasses on now. David hops in.

PATTI

What'd you hit?

He reaches for the key hanging in the ignition. Accidentally knocks it onto the floorboard.

DAVID

Fuck.

He gropes wildly at his feet. Scoops up the key. Stabs it into the ignition. Cranks the truck. Hauls ass.

Patti glares at him, waiting for an answer. He notices.

DAVID

It was just -- nothing. Junk in the road.

PATTI

You didn't see it?

He shakes his head. Nervously checks his rear-view.
Headlights way back. He floors it.

PATTI
Didn't feel like nothing.

DAVID
I didn't see it. Okay?

PATTI
Don't have to bite my head off.
(under her breath)
Figured something like this was
going to happen.

He checks the rear-view again.

PATTI
Tried to tell you we need to stop
but no. You got a schedule.

DAVID
This might be my dad's last
Thanksgiving.

PATTI
So now it's my fault?

DAVID
It's not anybody's fault!

She burns him a where's-that-coming-from look. They ride in
silence.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

David pulls up to a pump. Hops out.

He swipes his card through a reader. Dispenses the gas.
Looks around. Spots

A pay phone on the side of the building, by the rest rooms.

He jogs to the pay phone. Grabs the receiver. DIAL TONE.
He puts it down. Walks into the men's room.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A condom dispenser on the wall. He slams his fist into it,
loosening it. It shifts. Hangs precariously.

He holds his hand. Winces in pain.

He hugs the sink. Heaves for all he's worth. Nothing comes out.

Slowly, he gazes up at his reflection in the mirror: He's as pale as a sheet.

His hair's a mess. He combs it.

He coughs. Clears his throat. Walks out.

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

He glances around the parking lot. Deserted.

He picks up the phone receiver. Punches three numbers, lightning quick.

Ring. Ring. Then

OPERATOR (V.O.)
9-1-1 Emergency.

He slams the receiver down.

He sprints up to the Tahoe. The pump has cut off. He replaces the hose. Jumps in. Hauls ass away.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER BRIDGE - NIGHT

David crosses Big Muddy on the I-20 suspension bridge. A sign overhead reads "WELCOME TO MISSISSIPPI."

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

Patti reads her BlackBerry.

PATTI
Embassy Suites. Exit one.
Vicksburg. Should be right on it.

David checks his rear-view. Sees

A MISSISSIPPI HIGHWAY PATROL CAR on his ass.

He looks at his speedometer, freaked. 65 on the money.

DAVID
Shit.

PATTI
What's wrong?

DAVID
Cop. Probably saw the broke
headlight.

 PATTI
Wonderful.

She watches the cop in her side mirror.

EXT. I-20 - NIGHT

David reaches the end of the bridge. Signals. Sails onto an off ramp. The patrol car follows at a safe distance.

EXT. EMBASSY SUITES - NIGHT

A three-story hotel on a bluff overlooking the river. David peels into the parking lot. Rolls to the entrance.

The patrol car continues on, passing the hotel.

David runs inside the lobby.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

David, now wearing sweats and a Duke University T-shirt, channel surfs from the edge of the bed.

Patti applies facial cream on the other side of the bed.

David flips through all the news channels -- FOX, CNN, MSNBC. Doesn't linger on anything too long.

He tosses the remote. Slips into sandals.

 DAVID
Think I left my shaving kit in the
car.

 PATTI
Could you get my water too?

He nods. Grabs a windbreaker. Walks out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

David punches his remote. DOORS UNLOCK. The Tahoe's one working headlight flashes.

He opens the back. Grabs a bottled water and shaving kit. Sets the water and shaving kit on the pavement. Lies down beside the truck.

He looks under the chassis. Something drips off the muffler.

UNDER THE TRUCK

He crawls on his belly under the chassis. Reaches up. Retracts his hand.

Just a wad of wet, black mud.

He wipes his hand on his pants.

MAN'S VOICE

There a problem here?

He looks around. Sees

A Mississippi HIGHWAY PATROLMAN, 30, no-nonsense look on his rugged face, crouching beside the truck. He shines a flashlight at David.

DAVID

No, officer. Just checking something.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

David slides out. The cop offers his hand. Helps him up.

PATROLMAN

Nice ride. This a two-thousand eleven?

David nods. The cop walks to the front of the vehicle. David follows.

PATROLMAN

Bummer. What happened?

DAVID

Deer.

The Patrolman nods understandingly. Examines the scratches on the hood, the spiderweb crack in the windshield.

PATROLMAN

Miracle it didn't join you in the front seat.

DAVID

Yeah.

David locks the truck with the remote.

DAVID

Wife's waiting. Better get back.

David paces toward the hotel's rear entrance. The Patrolman runs his finger down one of the scratches.

PATROLMAN

Where you from in Texas?

David stops. Swallows hard.

DAVID

Terrell. It's east of Dallas.

PATROLMAN

That where you hit the deer?

DAVID

Outside of town.

David notices two patrol cars parked by a dumpster.

DAVID

Y'all here for a convention or something?

PATROLMAN

Nope.

The cop marches up to David. Casts him a steely stare.

PATROLMAN

Looking for someone.

David tries not to shit. The officer grins.

PATROLMAN

Else I'd be down the hill at the casino.

He tips his big Mountie hat.

PATROLMAN

You have a safe trip.

DAVID

Yes sir.

The officer hoofs toward the patrol cars.

PATROLMAN
Get that headlight fixed.

DAVID
First thing in the morning. Yes
sir.

David sighs. Sprints to the rear entrance. Fumbles for his
card key. Inserts it in the lock. CLICK. Opens the door.

QUICK FOOTSTEPS behind him.

MAN'S VOICE
Sir?

David twirls.

The Patrolman's in his face.

DAVID
Y -- yes?

PATROLMAN
Forgot something.

He hands David his shaving kit and bottle of water.

DAVID
Thanks so much.

PATROLMAN
Obliged. Have a pleasant evening.

The Patrolman trots off. David catches his breath.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Dark. Patti sleeps alone on her side of the bed. A thin
sliver of light under a door.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

David sits on the toilet. A Mac notebook open on his lap.

INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN

Louisiana Highway Patrol Traffic Incident Page.

David scrolls down a long list. Stops on something.

SHREVEPORT. SHELL ROAD. 3.5 miles east of AIRWAY ROAD. Hit and Run. Pedestrian involved. Approximately 9:30 PM.

BACK TO SCENE

He closes the computer, concerned. Looks at his legs. Goose bumps. He shivers.

EXT. HIBERNIA BANK - DAY

David parks a few rows out from the building. Runs in.

INT. COMPLETE AUTO BODY - DAY

The Tahoe sits in a service bay. David sips a Coke. The shop manager, 25, NOSE RING, strolls over from an office.

NOSE RING

Going to run about nineteen hundred. Includes painting.

DAVID

How long's it going to take?

NOSE RING

We putty and buff everything out tonight. Paint tomorrow. Ready day after tomorrow.

DAVID

I need it tonight.

NOSE RING

No way that's happening, boss.

DAVID

I'm really in a jam here.

NOSE RING

Insurance will take a few days.

DAVID

I didn't say anything about insurance. Or the IRS either.

David produces a wad of hundreds. Nose Ring ogles the money.

NOSE RING

Dude. Don't know the kind of jam --

DAVID
Wife's anniversary present.

NOSE RING
GM parts come out of Memphis.
Still talking two days, boss.

DAVID
Do the best you can.

David shuffles the bills. Nose Ring salivates.

NOSE RING
Tomorrow morning okay?

EXT. EMBASSY SUITES - DAY

David and Patti get in their repaired Tahoe. Drive off. All signs of the accident have been wiped clean: truck looks new.

PATTI (O.S.)
How much we out?

DAVID (O.S.)
Just the deductible.

PATTI (O.S.)
So that's only about two-fifty?

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - DAY

David looks at Patti. Nods.

PATTI
That's not so bad.

Patti runs her finger across the new windshield.

PATTI
So where we getting to tonight?
Atlanta maybe?

DAVID
We're going in tonight.

PATTI
All the way to North Carolina? I
don't think so. It'll be too late.
Your folks will be in bed.

He fetches a cell phone out of his pocket. Dials.

DAVID
Thanks. Better let them know.

She stares out the window, disappointed.

EXT. TREE-LINED STREET - NIGHT

Nice brick homes in a well-heeled, upper middle-class neighborhood.

David's white Tahoe rolls to a stop at a traffic light. An OVERHEAD SIGN reads "DUKE UNIVERSITY, MAIN CAMPUS." An arrow points right. David takes a left.

EXT. TWO-STORY HOME - NIGHT

Fine brick house in the Federalist style. Circular drive.

The Tahoe slides up to the front door. Parks.

David and Patti hop out of the truck. David opens the back. Grabs luggage. Looks at the house.

Dark. A DOG BARKS in the distance. Finally, a light in an upstairs window snaps on.

The door opens. ELOISE RING, 50, exquisite in a leather coat over a frilly nightgown, appears in the jamb.

Hugs and kisses. Everyone walks in the house.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Eloise, David, and Patti step down into a great room with a fireplace, wide-screen TV, and floor-to-ceiling bookcase.

The familiar "M.A.S.H." TV THEME PLAYS.

DR. EARL RING, 68, imposing despite red pajamas and bunny slippers, rocks in a recliner, a TV remote in his hand. David takes Earl's hand. It shakes slightly, but surely.

Earl raises up. Hugs his son.

EARL
Hear you brought me some venison.

DAVID
Venison?

EARL
 Guess you wanted to kick our
 traditional turkey dinner up a
 notch.

DAVID
 I'm sorry, I --

EARL
 The deer you hit?

DAVID
 Oh. Yeah.

Patti looks at David questioningly. He shrugs his shoulders.
 Earl grabs his water glass. It slips from his hands.

ELOISE
 Praise God y'all are all right.

DAVID
 Yes.
 (to Earl)
 Heard you switched to Ropinirole.

EARL
 Couple weeks now.

DAVID
 Do you find it's alleviating any of
 your symptoms?

EARL
 Can't exactly kick ass in a one-
 legged race but...
 (to Patti)
 Would you like to watch something
 else, Pee Jay?

PATTI
 No. I like "M.A.S.H."

Earl switches the channel to CNN. Looks at David.

EARL
 So. Doe or buck?

David gazes around a beat.

DAVID
 Oh. Buck.

EARL
 Any hassles with your insurance?

A SIREN WAILS on TV. David eyes the screen nervously.

ON TV

Runners sprint in an Olympic race.

DAVID (O.S.)

No.

A photo of a young woman. Pretty. Sweet, innocent smile.

EARL (O.S.)

Got your vehicle fixed really quick. Who you with?

Police cars. Fire engines. Flashing lights pierce the night.

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Her Olympic dreams struck down by a hit and run driver last Saturday night.

Paramedics carry someone out of the woods on a stretcher.

NEWSCASTER

A hit and run driver who left her beside this dark, lonely road to die.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

NEWSCASTER (V.O.)

Marvin Chambley reporting for CNN.

David snatches Earl's remote. Knocks his water over. Changes the channel back to "M.A.S.H." Everyone looks at him.

PATTI

David...

David wipes up the water. Suddenly recalls Earl's question.

DAVID

Oh. Geico. They're great.

Earl nods. Studies David, perplexed. David stares at the TV.

EARL

We don't have to watch that.

DAVID
No. I like "M.A.S.H."

David laughs at something on the show. No one else gets it.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Unchanged since college. Duke pendants hanging. College texts in a bookcase. Ice Age computer and printer on a desk.

David throws a suitcase on the bed. Unpacks. Patti produces a bottle of Merlot and a corkscrew.

PATTI
When did you tell your dad you hit a deer?

DAVID
At the body shop. I called him.

PATTI
It wasn't a deer. Was it?

She twists the corkscrew. He stuffs clothes into a drawer.

DAVID
No. It was a rock or something.

PATTI
Why couldn't you just tell him the truth? You hit something in the road.

DAVID
Something in the road sounds like I ran off the road. Because I was drinking. I don't want him thinking that.

PATTI
He probably thinks that anyway.

POP. Patti uncorks the wine. Fills two styrofoam cups.

PATTI
You don't like your dad very much, do you?

He glares at her, taken aback.

DAVID
I love my dad.

She nods weakly. He shoves the suitcase aside. Grabs a cup. Gulps the wine. She fetches the other cup. Flops beside him on the bed.

She sips from her cup. Kisses his ear. He sets his wine down. She straddles him on the bed.

She kisses him, long and deep. Unbuttons his shirt. He glances up at something. Pushes her off.

PATTI

What?

DAVID

Mom.

They look up at a framed photo of a strikingly beautiful woman, about 30, on the wall above the bed.

PATTI

That's ridiculous.

DAVID

Wanted to get a hotel.

She rolls off him. Shakes her head, disgusted.

PATTI

We could take it down.

DAVID

No.

PATTI

Not like it's a sin.

Realization on his face. He gets down on all fours. Reaches under a dresser. She sits. Looks at him, curious.

PATTI

What you got under there? Porn?

He feels around. Way up. Grabs something.

PATTI

Wonderful. You go whack off. I'll crochet something.

He retrieves a baggie of pot. Brown after all these years.

He cradles the heirloom in his hand. Stares at it like it's a long-lost friend. Rejoins Patti on the bed.

PATTI
You smoked weed?

DAVID
Used to do a lot of things.

He stares at the contraband. She slips her arm around him.

PATTI
What else don't I know about you?

He fakes a smile. Squeezes the baggie for all it's worth.
She grabs her wine. His shoulders shake. He cries.

PATTI
David? What's wrong?

She sets her wine down.

PATTI
Is it your mom? I'm sorry I --

DAVID
No. It's okay.

He wipes his eyes. Regains composure. Bolts out with the baggie. She gazes after him, puzzled.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

David walks in. Dumps the pot in the toilet. Flushes.
Brown dust sucked into a tiny dot and gone.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Traditional trimmings on a grand table: turkey, casseroles, potatoes, yams.

Unidentified relatives, old and young, happy and crotchety, drunk and sober, load their plates.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Kin folk chow down. Watch

FOOTBALL ON TV. Duke Blue Devils v. Maryland Terrapins.

Patti eats beside David on a sofa. Sips white wine.

Earl sits in his recliner, plate in his lap, trying to eat. His hands tremble. Food falls off his fork before it reaches his mouth.

David sees him out of the corner of his eye.

Maryland scores. Boos around the room.

David gets up. Walks to his dad. His plate is full. Hardly anything has been eaten.

DAVID
Need a hand?

EARL
No. I'm fine.

David picks up Earl's fork. Starts to feed him.

EARL
I'm full. Thanks.

DAVID
You haven't eaten a thing.

EARL
I'll eat when Elsie's finished in there.

David puts the fork to Earl's mouth. Earl jerks away, spewing mashed potatoes on David's shirt. David sets the plate down.

DAVID
She's busy. I can help you.

EARL
I choke easily. She knows how to feed me.

DAVID
Then teach me.

EARL
Why? You're here what? Two days a year?

David retreats, the wind knocked out of him.

EARL
I can wait.

DAVID
Fine. Wait.

David snatches his plate. Walks out. Patti glances at Earl, then back at the game.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Patti lies across the bed, asleep. David sits at the desk. Works feverishly at the computer.

ON SCREEN is a newspaper article.

Embedded in the article is a photo of the same young woman we saw on TV. The headline is just off screen. We can't read it.

David hits the print button.

A copy of the article spits out of the printer.

David pulls the copy from the printer. Stares at the picture.

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

David drives. Patti talks on her BlackBerry.

PATTI

I think his Parkinson's is worse.

DAVID

Takes a month to get fully adjusted to the medication.

PATTI

David won't admit it.

DAVID

When his dopamine levels adjust, his symptoms will improve.

PATTI

(to David)

Hush. Can't hear her and you too.

(into phone)

Not you, Mom. David.

(beat)

Should be home tonight sometime.

David glances furtively in his rear-view.

EXT. I-20 - NIGHT

He breezes by a sign: "LOUISIANA STATE LINE, MADISON PARISH."

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

David takes an off ramp. Patti looks at the gas gauge.
Full.

PATTI
Where we going?

DAVID
Thought we'd pull in for the night.

PATTI
Where are we?

DAVID
Minden.

PATTI
Isn't that near Shreveport?

DAVID
Twenty miles.

PATTI
Might as well go on in. It's only
a couple hours. Want me to drive?

He swings into a motel parking lot.

PATTI
I want to sleep in my own bed
tonight. Come on. I'll drive.

He pulls her next to him. Hard. Whispers in her ear.

DAVID
Who's talking about sleep?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Cinder block walls. Snowy reception on an old tube-type TV.
GASPS.

PATTI
Say it.

Patti and David entwined in big squishy sex. Patti on top.
David's wrists tied to the bedposts with IV tubing.

DAVID
I'm shit.

She slaps him in the face. Thrusts in earnest.

PATTI
Louder.

DAVID
I'm shit!

She slaps him harder. He hits the finish line. Hollers.
His wrists stretch the plastic tubing to the breaking point.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

David and Patti lie naked on the bed. Patti nods off. David nudges her. She opens one eye.

DAVID
I'm hungry.

PATTI
Think I saw a KFC on the way in.

She kisses him. Big and wet.

PATTI
Going to have to make cheap motels
a part of our regular thing.

He sits up. Puts his underwear on.

DAVID
How about a hamburger?

Pants.

PATTI
That sounds good.

Shirt.

PATTI
No onions.

She closes her eyes, relaxed in the afterglow. He watches her as he puts on socks and shoes, a sad, resigned look on his face. He grabs car keys off the dresser. Walks out.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

David steps to the Tahoe. Unlocks it. Opens the rear passenger side door. Removes a sport coat and necktie from a hanger. Slips the coat on. Gets in the driver's side.

INT. TAHOE - NIGHT

David flips the overhead light on. Hurriedly ties the necktie. Removes something from his pants pocket.

The newspaper article he printed at his dad's house. He lays it on the dash.

INSERT - NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

The headline reads: "OLYMPIC HOPEFUL MOWED DOWN IN HIT AND RUN."

Her picture under the headline. The caption: "Olympic Hopeful Laurel Whitaker."

BACK TO SCENE

He cranks the truck. Sits there a beat. Finally drives off.

EXT. MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT

Doctors, medical interns and patients scurry about. David strolls in the main entrance.

INT. MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER RECEPTION - NIGHT

David reaches into his coat pocket. Produces a stethoscope.

He beats the stethoscope against his hand as he walks. Stops at an elevator. A directory reads "ICU SUITE 200."

INT. SECOND-FLOOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The elevator opens. David steps out, the stethoscope around his neck. The floor is dark. Eerily quiet. He spots a nurse's station. Strolls over.

A nurse erases a patient's name off a big white board. Jots another name down with a marker pen.

David surveys the board. Marches into the ICU.

INT. ICU - NIGHT

An open ward with beds separated by privacy curtains.

David stops at ROOM 200G. Patient: WHITAKER, LAUREL S.

Folks crowd the bed, obscuring his view of her.

He fishes his cell phone out of his pocket. Puts the phone to his ear, as if taking a call.

DAVID

Stoddard.

(beat)

Three milligrams MAO-B inhibitor.

(beat)

What's Cigna cover?

Two nurses roll a crash cart by. David steps out of the way. Continues his fake conversation.

A woman, 40, walks out of the Whitaker room, crying.

He turns away from her, avoiding eye contact.

VOICE ON INTERCOM

Memorial Medical Center visiting
hours are now over.

He leans against the wall, his back to the Whitaker room.

JOHNNY WHITAKER, 60, a mountain in size fourteen Brogans, bursts out of the room, nearly running over David. A SHORT MAN chases after him.

SHORT MAN

Johnny! Wait!

David sees the room is now vacant. He steps in.

INT. WHITAKER ROOM - NIGHT

LAUREL WHITAKER, 19, lies in bed, unconscious. While her face is as pretty as it was on TV and in the newspaper, her body is burdened with IV tubes, monitors, and wires.

A urine collection bag dangles at her side. Yellow pee drips into it.

David snatches a medical chart off her bed. Reads it. A grave look grows.

He leans over her. His cheek nearly meets hers.

He touches her hair. A look on his face of unbearable pain.
 He backs away, repelled by some unseen force. Spins. Bolts out, knocking into a nurse on his way to the hall.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

David runs in. Grabs the sink. VOMITS for all he's worth.

INT. TAHOE - MOVING - NIGHT

David drives. Streetlights passing.

A BUZZ in his coat. His CELL. He answers.

DAVID

Hello.

PATTI (V.O.)

Where the hell are you?

He gazes around like he doesn't know. Spots a street sign.

DAVID

Benton Road.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

Patti sits on the bed, fully dressed, BlackBerry against her ear. Her overnight bag on the bed beside her.

PATTI

I called you twice. Why didn't you pick up?

DAVID'S CELL PHONE SCREEN: Two Missed Calls.

DAVID

Had to go to the bathroom. Left the phone in the truck.

PATTI

You've been gone over an hour.

DAVID

Got lost.

PATTI

You have the GPS.

DAVID

That thing doesn't work in cities.
And I couldn't find any hamburger --

PATTI

I want to go home.

She hangs up. Stares at the door, worried.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

McMansions on Texas-sized lots.

David spins into a driveway in front of a faux Colonial brick ranch. A garage door rolls open. He drives into the garage.

The door closes after him.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

David and Patti sleep on a king-size bed with canopy. Weak sunlight streams through a gap in the curtains.

An ALARM BEEPS. Patti wakes. Hits it off. Peeks over at David. Still asleep.

She gets up. Walks to a dresser. Sees herself in the mirror. Glances back at him. Still motionless.

She grabs his wallet off the dresser. Opens it.

Several twenties. Tens. Singles. A credit card receipt. She examines it. It's from Antonio's Trattoria.

DAVID

What are you doing?

She looks in the mirror. Spots

David looking at her from the bed. Wide awake.

PATTI

Sally's lunch. It's today.

She stuffs the receipt back in his wallet. Faces him.

PATTI

Don't know if I'll have a chance to
get by the ATM.

David sits up. Nods. She takes a twenty.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Patti brushes her teeth. David appears in the door jamb.

DAVID
Would you stand by me if something
bad happened?

PATTI
What?

DAVID
Simple yes or no.

She spits. Gazes at him in the vanity mirror, resolved.

PATTI
Honey, the odds are with you on the
Parkinson's. And even if you do
end up getting it --

DAVID
I'm not talking about Parkinson's.

PATTI
Then what are you talking about?

DAVID
It's a simple question.

She looks at him again in the mirror, puzzled.

PATTI
Nothing's that simple.

She rinses. When she looks in the mirror again, he's gone.

INT. SUNRISE MEDICAL - DAY

A HISPANIC MAN, 40, sits on a table, a thermometer in his
mouth. David scribbles notes on a pad.

The THERMOMETER BEEPS. David removes it from the patient's
mouth. Reads it.

DAVID
Fiebre. Ninety-nine.

The man nods. David jots a prescription.

DAVID
Alergico a la penicilina?